846 751 825 278 856 them till they burn. The smoke then rises, and he exposes the child to it for a long time : the body, face, nose and mouth. The baby begins to cry ; he sneezes, he coughs ; this is just what is wanted. Then the doctor takes what remains of the pieces of skin, grinds them, makes a powder, mixes it with *tihuhlu* (1) grease of the year before last and consequently hard enough to make an ointment. With this ointment he rubs the whole body of the child, especially the joints, which he extends gently in order to assist the baby's growth.

846 751 853 All this fumigation and manipulation is intended to act as a preventive. Having been thus exposed to all external dangers, dangers which are represented by the beasts of the bush, the child may go out of the hut. He is now able "to cross the foot prints of wild beasts" (tjemakanya mitila) without harm. Snakes will not bite him, at any rate their bite will not hurt him ; lions will not kill him. The remainder of the powder is put into a little bit of reed closed at both ends, which the mother has to carry with her during the whole nursing period in order to continue the treatment.

846 755 763 821 This rite of the broken pot is also the great preventive remedy against the much dreaded ailment of babies, *convulsions*. If a child suffers from this, they will say : "Ntlalile shirengelen," viz. "he did not find any help in the broken pot" and the parents will go to another doctor whose drugs are more powerful, to have the child once more exposed to the smoke. It may even be that a grown-up man will undergo this treatment again, if he has been ill with convulsions, but, in this case, the broken pot with its pieces of skin is put on the head of the patient, which has been first covered with a wisp of cuscuta (hare dja yendjeyendje). The great aim of all the medication of children by the "milombyana" is also to fight against convulsions, as we shall see (2).

(1) The tihuhlu are the seeds of the ukuhlu tree known under the name of mafureira. They are oleaginous and the fat (mafura) obtained from them is very much used for external applications amongst the Thongas.

(2) In *Savage Childhood* p. 12, Dudley Kidd describes this "baptism of smoke" amongst Zulus. Some dirt is scraped from the father's body and is mixed with other drugs in order to impart to the child his ancestral spirit. Another ingredient

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856 mouthful to drink, then dip her finger into the medecine and let
737 two or three drops fall from it on the fontanella ; then she spits on
737 the lower part of the shell and presses it all along the sternum
854 of the baby as far as the navel. This is said to "nurse the child, to make him grow." Should he be sick, this treatment will be repeated many times a day. If he is well and goes about with his mother, she will pour the *milombyana* into the small calabash and give him a few sups from it from time to time.

The child must never drink ordinary water, but only the
853 *milombyana* decoction. It is a taboo. Should the mother travel
271 far from home and leave behind her the *milombyana* pot, she is
484 allowed to add some water to the calabash, but she must always leave a little of the decoction in the calabash before doing so. The mother herself is not allowed to drink the water of another country. She must only drink water from home and, if she is forced to travel, she must take a little powder from the reed each time she drinks, so that the child may become familiarised with that country (1). These laws must be kept during all the nursing period.

862 The child begins to eat *solid food* as soon as his teeth are cut, and when he is able to take it with his own hands. But some people do not like to give it to him too soon, as they say his stools become fetid. When later on he is able to go outside and to take care of himself, then he can eat any ordinary food.

853 If the mother dies during the nursing period, the little one is almost sure to follow her. The baby is fed with goat's or cow's milk, but the Natives do not know that they must add water to it ; sooner or later therefore the child dies of enteritis.

I have heard of some cases in which another woman has taken charge of the child, nursed him with her own milk and weaned him successfully ; her own child being older, she weaned him earlier than the usual time and nursed the other child in his

261 (1) A similar custom is observed in the case of moving from one country to another.
484 When a Ronga comes back from Kimberley having found a wife there, both bring with them a little of the earth of the place they are leaving, and the woman must eat a little of it every day in her porridge in order to accustom herself to her new abode. This earth provides the transition between the two domiciles !

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853 grandmother, by name Mishidohi, who had an adult son and had had no other child since, prepared light beer and other appropriate food and succeeded in secreting milk in her own breast ; so the child was saved !

856 826 A child during these first months of its existence is regarded as a very weak creature. "I mati !" i. e. "It is nothing but water !" Hence perhaps the curious idea that a baby, just like a new born animal, is able to swim, at any rate it cannot be drowned : it floats on the water. When a woman carrying a little child on her back crosses a river and is in danger of being swept away by the stream, people shout to her from the shore : "Untie the 'ntehe' and let the baby cross. Think of yourself, the little one will follow all right." They say: "Psa yila, it is taboo that a baby should sink." Note the curious use of the word "yila" in this sentence.

3) Dentition.

856 364 351 As soon as the child has cut the two lower and upper incisors, the mother takes a white bead (tjambu) and ties it to one of the child's hairs above the forehead. This white bead is said to help the other teeth to come out normally. If this precaution were not taken, the child would not become intelligent ; he would shiver instead of smiling ; he would bring forward his lips and his tongue to prevent the air from getting into his mouth ! When all the teeth are duly cut, the bead is removed and thrown away *talen*, viz. on the *tala*. The *tala* is the ash-heap, the place behind the hut on which everyone throws ashes and dirt. It plays a great part in the customs of the Thongas and other South African Bantus.

195 The teeth (tinyo-menyo) of the children are called figuratively *hobe*. The *hobe* (pl. *tihobe*) means the grain of pounded maize which is white and very similar to a tooth. Hence the expression : "A humi hobe," "he has got out a grain of maize," employed to indicate the cutting of the teeth.

787 766 856 When a child cuts his upper teeth first, it is a bad omen. In the Northern clans and especially amongst the Ba-Pedi, it is a great taboo. At his death the child must be buried in wet soil.

787 Amongst the Ba-Ronga the ill-omen is not considered so serious.
782 Later on, when the child loses his first teeth, he must not
856 let them fall out hap-hazard anywhere. He must take the fallen tooth, go to the ash-heap, put his finger into the hole and say : "Kokwa, kokwa, ndji hwe hobe !" (Grandfather, grandfather, give me a grain of maize !) Then he throws the tooth over his shoulder on to the ashes and goes home without looking backward. Should he look backward, his grandfather (the spirit of the departed ?) would not give him a new tooth (1). This custom is no longer taboo and is disappearing.

856 When a younger brother cuts his teeth, they are considered
163 as pushing away or pulling out the teeth of the elder, as the younger brother comes into the world, as a rule, three years after the elder.

As regards *hair*, the first cutting is accompanied by the following
302 custom : the mother sprinkles some drops of her milk on the
856 forehead and on the occiput of the child ; then she cuts his hair and throws it away in the midst of thick grass. When she cuts her own hair, she always leaves a lock on both sides of the head for the amusement of the child, till he is able to walk.

853 Nursing women very often anoint themselves with ochre. This is said to be in order to prevent their husbands from having relations with them.

These rites are not considered as very important. But there are three others which are most punctiliously observed, and which divide the nursing period into three subperiods : the presentation to the moon, after three months, the tying of the cotton string, after one year, and the weaning ceremonies at the close of the period.

4) The presentation to the moon (ku yandla).

821 The appearance of the new moon is always received with cheers by the Ba-Ronga. The first person who sees it shouts :

(1) Comparative Ethnography : I remember quite well that, when I was a boy, we were told in Neuchâtel that we must not let a broken tooth get lost, lest it should be found by a dog and a dog's tooth would grow in its stead !

821 "Kengelekezeeeee!" and this exclamation is repeated from one village to another. *Kenge* is the descriptive adverb which means the form of the crescent of the moon. Each "moon," or month, is considered as being a new one, the old one having died, and there were special names for each month of the year (See Part VI).

[841] 856 828 821 852 As soon as the mother of the child has resumed her menses (the menses are called tinwheti, months) and this happens as a rule on the third month after the delivery amongst Thonga women, she takes her garments, washes them, puts on new clothing and then proceeds to the ceremony of the *yandla*. The child must be "given his month." This is done in the following way. The day the new moon appears, the mother takes with her a torch or merely a brand from the fire and the grandmother follows her carrying the child : both go to the ash-heap behind the hut. There the mother throws the burning stick towards the moon and the grandmother flings the child into the air saying : "This is your moon!" (hweti ya ku hi yoleyo) : then she puts the child on to the ashes. The little one cries and rolls over in the dirt on the ash-heap. Then his mother snatches him up (wutla), nurses him, and they go home.

This ceremony, which is certainly a rite of passage, is said to "open the chest of the child" otherwise "his ears would die," he would remain stupid. When a child is not intelligent, it is usual to say to him : You have not been shown your moon! (1)

852 846 854 Therefore the *yandla* means a progress made by the child, the entrance into a new phase of his existence. The fact is emphasised by the three following changes which take place on the day of the yandla : 1) Henceforth his father is allowed to take the child in his arms. Up to that day, this was taboo, as the child being continually with his mother was perhaps polluted by the dangerous blood following the birth ; but now she has washed her clothing and has been purified by the reappearance of the menses ; so the danger no longer exists. 2) It is now

(1) However the name of the child's month is soon forgotten and is never afterwards recalled. This seems to show that the custom is dying out, as well as the knowledge of the names of the various months.

851 a grown up child (1). The expression *fuya ñwana* confirms our explanation. This custom is not a protective rite : the physician has nothing to do with it ; it is really an act by which the new-born child becomes a regular member of the community. The strict prohibition of renewed conception before this rite has been accomplished is evidently dictated by the feeling that another child must not appear before this one has been duly received into the family.

6) The weaning.

862 856 A whole year, even more, will elapse after the *boha puri* before the little one can be weaned. He will learn to speak and to walk, and it is only when his intelligence is sufficiently developed to allow him to run small errands that the date of the weaning will be fixed. When his parents can send him to the next hut to ask for snuff and see him coming back holding the tobacco, they say : "Now the time has come !"

The rite of weaning is accomplished in the following manner in Nondwane. (Mboza).

862 824 First of all, the father looks for a young *ntjopfa* tree which has only one root. The ntjopfa is an anonacea bush, which colonists sometimes call the wild custard. (Its fruit is very much like custard fruit and it is said that the true cultivated custard can be grafted on it). The root of this tree is said to have the property of making people forget. The mother cooks a pot of Kafir corn in which she has put the medicine. This 862 will help the child to forget the breast. But the great act is the 782 *hondlola* which takes place under the direction of the physician. 755 The mother pounds some mealies, pours water on them and adds some leaven ; in this way she makes a little light beer (buputju). She keeps a little of the bran of the pounded mealies. The doctor comes, kills a chicken and sprinkles this bran with the blood and *hahla*, viz. offers a regular sacrifice. He prays to the spirits of his own family and asks those of the child's family to

(1) This word *khuma* is also employed to designate boys who have not yet gone through the circumcision school. *Bukhuma* is the despicable state of uncircumcision. The state of a child before the ceremony of *boha puri* is another kind of bukhuma.